

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 00709 010957Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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P 010700Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 958

S E C R E T MADRID 709

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MASS SP, MO

SUBJ: US ARMS SALES TO MOROCCO

REF: (A) STATE 15808; (B) STATE 21870

1. CHARGE ACCOMPANIED BY POL COUNSELOR, BRIEFED MFA UNDER SECRETARY ROVIRA JAN 31 ON DETAILS OF PROSPECTIVE US MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO MOROCCO USING INFORMATION PROVIDED IN REFTELS. ALSO PRESENT WITH ROVIRA AT MEETING WERE MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MIDDLE EASTERN AFFAIRS (FERRER) AND DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS (PERINAT). CHARGE CONCLUDED BRIEFING BY RESTATING THAT USG POLICY OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO MOROCCO WAS ALSO IN SPAIN'S INTEREST SINCE IT WOULD HELP SUPPORT HASSAN'S MODERATE REGIME AND SINCE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE SOURCES WOULD BE WORSE (PARA THREE OF REFTEL.) CHARGE REEMPHASIZED THAT KING HASSAN HAD ASSURED US OFFICIALS THAT THESE ARMS WOULD NOT BE USED AGAINST FRIENDS OF US. AND THAT AMOUNTS WERE MODEST AND STRETCHED OUT OVER TIME.

2. MFA OFFICIALS LISTENED CAREFULLY AND TOOK DETAILED NOTES. AT CONCLUSION OF BRIEFING ROVIRA NOTED THAT KING HASSAN'S PROMISE OF NON-USE AGAINST FRIENDS WAS DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL STATEMENT RATHER THAN EXPLICIT CONDITION ATTACHED TO PROVISION OF ARMS AND ASKED WHAT WOULD BE POSITION OF U.S. IF EQUIPMENT USED AGAINST SPAIN IN SPAITE OF HIS ASSURANCES. IN THIS CONNECTION, PERINAT INTERJECTED

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MADRID 00709 010957Z

THAT MOROCCANS WERE PRONE TO MAKE SUCH PROMISES AND THEN

FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THEM. POL COUNSELOR COMMENTED THAT NO ONE COULD SAY WHAT U.S. WOULD DO IN SUCH HYPOTHETICAL SITUATION BUT THAT SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES IN PAST HAD SHOWN THAT THERE WERE ACTIONS U.S. COULD TAKE IF UNDERSTANDINGS ON ARMS SALES CLEARLY VIOLATED, SUCH AS SUSPENSION OF DELIVERY OF ITEMS DUE OR REFUSAL TO PROVIDE SPARE PARTS UNTIL MATTER CLARIFIED. CHARGE SAID SPAIN COULD BE MORE CONFIDENT OF TYPE OF POSITION OR ACTION U.S. WOULD TAKE IN SUCH SITUATION THAN OF THAT WHICH OTHER POTENTIAL SUPPLIERS MIGHT TAKE.

3. FERRER QUESTIONED SIGNIFICANCE OF KING'S ASSURANCES NOT TO USE ARMS AGAINST "FRIENDS OF U.S.", NOTING THAT TALL COUNTRIES AGAINST WHICH MOROCCO COULD CONCEIVABLY USE THESE WEAPONS COULD FIT THAT DESCRIPTION. ROVIRA, HOWEVER, TURNED CONVERSATION TO ANOTHER SUBJECT BEFORE FERRER COULD PURSUE THIS LINE OF ARGUMENT. PERINAT THEN RAISED QUESTION AS TO WHAT EXTENT RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS ON USE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT STIPULATED IN FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT WOULD APPLY TO THOSE ARMS THAT MOROCCO WOULD FINANCE WHOLLY OR PARTLY WITH U.S. CREDITS. HE ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHICH MILITARY ITEMS ALREADY ACQUIRED OR IN PLANNING STAGE WERE THROUGH DIRECT CREDITS AS OPPOSED TO CASH SALES. CHARGE SAID HE WOULD CHECK TO SEE IF ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON HOW CREDIT HAD BEEN AND WOULD BE APPLIED.

4. ROVIRA ALSO ASKED TO WHAT EXTENT, IF AT ALL, THE USSR AND/OR OTHER COUNTRIES WERE ALSO NOW SUPPLYING ARMS TO MOROCCO. CHARGE SAID HE DID NOT HAVE SPECIFIC INFO ON THIS POINT, AND USED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EMPHASIZE THAT WE HOPED OUR PROGRAM WOULD PRE-EMPT OTHER, LESS RELIABLE SUPPLIERS.

5. CHARGE STRESSED AT BEGINNING OF BRIEFING AND AGAIN AT END THAT PROVISION OF SUCH DETAILED INFORMATION ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIRD COUNTRY WAS NOT COMMON PRACTICE AND SHOULD BE TREATED WITH GREATEST RESERVE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MADRID 00709 010957Z

6. COMMENT: MFA OFFICIALS MANNER DURING DISCUSSION AT BEST WAS SOBER. BELIEVE WE CAN EXPECT FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS FOR FURTHER DETAILS OR CLARIFICATION. MEANWHILE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE AS TO RESTRICTIONS ON USE AND RESALE OF ITEMS AND HOW CREDIT HAS BEEN AND IS TO BE APPLIED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MILITARY SALES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MADRID00709
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750037-0943
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750183/aaaacvfv.tel
Line Count: 114
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 15808, 75 STATE 21870
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 JUN 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US ARMS SALES TO MOROCCO
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, SP, MO, (SISCO, JOSEPH J)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006